

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-06

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PASS DECAIRES, HEW/OIH

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TAGS: TPHY, OSCI, TBIO, UK

SUBJ: REGULATORY CONTROL OF ACUPUNCTURE

REF: STATE 58059

1. HAVE APPROACHED UK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES REGARDING STATUS OF ACUPUNCTURE IN UK MEDICAL PRACTICE. ACUPUNCTURE IS RESPONSIBILITY OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, HOSPITAL SPECIALTIES DEVELOPMENT DIVISION, HANNIBAL HOUSE, ELEPHANT AND CASTLE, LONDON, SE1. THIS DIVISION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES SUCH AS FRINGE MEDICINES, ACUPUNCTURE, OSTEOPATHY, AND OTHER SPECIAL TECHNIQUES.

2. DISCUSSED ACUPUNCTURE WITH DR. SHENOLIKAR, SENIOR MEDICAL OFFICER OF HOSPITAL SPECIALTIES DEVELOPMENT DIVISION. SHENOLIKAR INDICATED THAT FOLLOWING A VISIT TO CHINA BY SIR GEORGE GODBER, FORMER CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, NHS ENCOURAGED ITS REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS TO ATTEMPT SCIENTIFIC USAGE OF ACUPUNCTURE FOR CERTAIN SPECIAL AILMENTS. FUNDS WERE GIVEN FOR ANESTHETIC EXPERIMENTS AND SPECIAL WORK ON BACK PAINS. SHENOLIKAR INDICATED THAT TO DATE THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF ACUPUNCTURE TECHNIQUES BY REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS WITHIN THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, BUT THAT THE NHS DEFINITELY DID NOT DISCOURAGE THE USE OF SUCH TECHNIQUES

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WITHIN THE SERVICE.

3. REGARDING CHINESE COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE LOCATED IN OXFORD, SHENOLIKAR STATED THAT THE NHS WAS AWARE OF THIS ORGANIZATION, BUT THAT AS FAR AS HE KNEW THE COLLEGE DID NOT EMPLOY REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS, AND IT DEFINITELY HAS NO OFFICIAL STATUS IN THE UK NHS OR WITHIN THE PRIVATE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE BY REGISTERED PRACTITIONERS. SHENOLIKAR SAID THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE NHS TO PREVENT PRIVATE CITIZENS FROM SEEKING TREATMENT FROM SUCH UNOFFICIAL ACUPUNCTURE PRACTICING INSTITUTIONS, BUT THAT ANY CERTIFICATES OR DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY SUCH INSTITUTIONS WOULD NOT BE RECOGNIZED UNDER BRITISH LAW AND COULD NOT BE USED, FOR EXAMPLE, AS CERTIFICATION FOR ABSENCE FROM WORK.

3. WILL ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ON PRACTICE OF ACUPUNCTURE WITHIN THE UK AND TRANSMIT LATER.

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